

Hawai'i's Big Five (Plus 2)

"By 1941, every time a native Hawaiian switched on his lights, turned on the gas or rode on a street car, he paid a tiny tribute into Big Five coffers." (Alexander MacDonald, 1944)

The story of Hawaii's largest companies dominates Hawai'i's economic history. Since the early/mid-1800s, until relatively recently, five major companies emerged and dominated the Island's economic framework. Their common trait: they were focused on agriculture - sugar.

They became known as the Big Five: C. Brewer (1826;) Theo H. Davies (1845;) Amfac - starting as Hackfeld & Company (1849;) Castle & Cooke (1851) and Alexander & Baldwin (1870.)

C. Brewer & Co.

Founded: October 1826; Capt. James Hunnewell (American Sea Captain, Merchant; Charles Brewer was American Merchant)
Incorporated: February 7, 1883



Amfac

Founded: 1849; Heinrich Hackfeld and Johann Carl Pflueger (German Merchants)
Incorporated: 1897 (H Hackfeld & Co;) American Factors Ltd, 1918



Theo H. Davies & Co.

Founded: 1845; James and John Starkey, and Robert C. Janion (English Merchants; Theophilus Harris Davies was Welch Merchant)
Incorporated: January 1894



Castle & Cooke

Founded: 1851; Samuel Northrup Castle and Amos Starr Cooke (American Mission Secular Agents)
Incorporated: 1894



Alexander & Baldwin

Founded: 1870; Samuel Thomas Alexander & Henry Perrine Baldwin (American, Sons of Missionaries)
Incorporated: 1900



The Making of the Big Five

Some suggest they were started by the missionaries. Actually, only Castle & Cooke has direct ties to the mission. However, Castle ran the 'depository' and Cooke was a teacher, neither were missionary ministers.

Alexander & Baldwin were sons of missionaries, but not a formal part of the mission. Brewer was an American sea captain and merchant, the founders of Davies were English merchants and the founders of Amfac were German merchants.

Rather than 'Missionaries' being a common tie between the Big Five, it was actually their roles as 'Factors' that they shared.

As the sugar industry pushed ahead, something else new was introduced into the economic scheme of things. In Honolulu some new firms began business solely to handle the affairs of the scattered plantations. They began by acting as selling agents for the planters.

Gradually they took over other functions: financing crops, importing labor, purchasing machinery for the planters and serving in all ways as their business agents. The new businesses soon found themselves running the sugar industry. (MacDonald)

By the 1880s, five of these concerns, called factors, eventually dominated the field. They branched out into other businesses. To expand profits out of the sugar trade, they started their own refinery in California; it was to become the largest in the world. They built up a fleet of ships, the Matson line, to carry the sugar away and to bring back goods and passengers.

They developed inter-island shipping, built hotels, put capital into insurance, cattle, pineapples, banking. They took over bodily the wholesaling of goods coming into the Islands; ninety percent of retail stock came from their warehouses.

Their capital started the public utilities. Their street railway transported Hawaiians, their gas and electric plants lighted the city, they acquired the communications systems. (MacDonald)

Acting as agents for thirty-six of the thirty-eight sugar plantations, the Big Five openly monopolized the sugar trade. Twenty-nine firms, producing seven out of every eight tons of sugar exported from the Islands, refined, markets and distributed through the Big Five's wholly owned California and Hawaiian Sugar Company, whose refinery, the largest in the world, was on San Francisco Bay. (Kent)

It grew to the point that, "Everything that comes into the territory comes through a large corporation. The independent businessman who attempts to enter business here immediately finds that even nationally advertised lines from the mainland are tied up by the Big Five."

"It is almost impossible to get an independent line of business as they have everything - lumber paint, right down the line." (Edward Walker, High Sheriff of Hawai'i, 1937; Kent)

Factoring

The concept of factoring, in which an agent works on behalf of one or more plantations, began in the early history of the sugar industry. Originally, planters faced financial difficulties that forced many into bankruptcy.

Factors have been a basic part of Hawaii's economic pattern for 100 years. It is comparable to, but in many respects different from, practice common on the mainland where manufacturers, distributors, hotels, insurance companies and transportation firms depend on agents for services they cannot conveniently and economically provide for themselves.

With the development of the factors, however, the problems of financing, buying necessary equipment and transporting and marketing the crop could be handled much more efficiently by a few agents. During periods of hardship, factors served as bankers of the plantations and, in many cases, saved them from dissolution.

The mechanics of the commission system certainly favored the agent over the planter. But the agents argued that the system proved itself in bad times when their influence with banks and governments kept the plantations afloat. In truth their ability to raise capital was their most important function and led to their role as stockholders in their client-grower companies. Also over time their services broadened to embrace accounting and tax assistance and technical counsel in both factor and field operations. (Greaney)

Soon the agents became so important in coordinating various aspects of large-scale production that they increased their control of the industry. As sugar plantations prospered, so did their agents. (Rayson)

Some Sugar History

Sugar was a canoe crop; the early Polynesian settlers to Hawai'i brought sugar cane with them and demonstrated that it could be grown successfully in the islands.

In pre-contact times, sugarcane was not processed as we know sugar today, but was used by chewing the juicy stalks. Its leaves were used for inside house thatching, or for outside (if pili grass wasn't available.) The flower stalks of sugar cane were used to make a dart, sometimes used during the Makahiki games. (Canoe Crops)

The first written record of sugarcane in Hawai'i came from Captain James Cook, at the time he made initial contact with the Islands. On January 19, 1778, off Kaua'i, he notes, "We saw no wood, but what was up in the interior part of the island, except a few trees about the villages; near which, also, we could observe several plantations of plantains and sugar-canes." (Cook)

Cook notes that sugar was cultivated, "The potatoe fields, and spots of sugar-canes, or plantains, in the higher grounds, are planted with the same regularity; and always in some determinate figure; generally as a square or oblong". (Cook)

It appears Cook was the first outsider to put sugarcane to use. One of his tools in his fight against scurvy (severe lack of vitamin C (ascorbic acid) in your diet) was beer.

On December 7, 1778 he notes, "Having procured a quantity of sugar cane; and having, upon a trial, made but a few days before, found that a strong decoction of it produced a very palatable beer, I ordered some more to be brewed, for our general use."

"A few hops, of which we had some on board, improved it much. It has the taste of new malt beer; and I believe no one will doubt of its being very wholesome. And yet my inconsiderate crew alleged that it was injurious to their health." (Cook)

While the crew "would (not) even so much as taste it", he "gave orders that no grog should be served ... (he) and the officers, continued to make use of this sugarcane beer, whenever (they) could get materials for brewing it." (Cook) Others later made rum from the sugarcane.

But beer and rum were not a typical sugar use; shortly after, the first reported processing of sugar was noted. "(I)n 1802 sugar was first made at these islands, by a native of China, on the island of Lanai."

"He came here in one of the vessels trading for sandal wood, and brought a stone mill, and boilers, and after grinding off one small crop and making it into sugar, went back the next year with his fixtures, to China." (Torbert; Polynesian, January 31, 1852)

As production grew, the early sugar ventures were either Hawaiian-owned or regulated by Hawaiian rulers. Stephen W Reynolds, crew on the New Hazard, kept a diary; his March 5, 1811 entry (presumably in Honolulu) notes:

"Sent a boat ashore after water. Went ashore in cutter with captain; saw the King's cane mill and boiler, ship—a small one hauled up of about 175 tons, fort, etc." (This suggests that King Kamehameha was making sugar in Honolulu in 1811.) (Cushing)

A friend of the King, Don Francisco de Paula Marin is also credited with early sugar processing. In Robert Crichton Wyllie manuscripts of Marin's journals, Wyllie noted an entry concerning sugar, "On the 25th of February, 1819, he was engaged in making sugar." There are eight additional entries that mention sugar or molasses. (Cushing)

In most instances, the Hawaiian-owned sugar processing was managed by either Chinese sugar boilers or American shopkeepers in rural districts. (MacLennan) Although sugar cane had grown in Hawai'i for many centuries, its commercial cultivation for the production of sugar did not occur until 1825.

In that year, John Wilkinson and Governor Boki started a plantation in upper Mānoa Valley. Within six months they had seven acres of cane growing, and by the time Wilkinson died, in September 1826, they had actually manufactured some sugar. The sugar mill was later converted into a distillery for rum, prompting Ka'ahumanu to have the cane fields destroyed around 1829. (Schmitt)

The first sugar to be made in Hawai'i is credited to a man from China. The newspaper Polynesian, in its issue of January 31, 1852, carried this item attributed to a prominent sugar planter on Maui, LL Torbert:

“Mr. John White, who came to these islands in 1797, and is now living with me, says that in 1802, sugar was first made at these islands by a native of China, on the island of Lāna‘i.”



“He came here in one of the vessels trading for sandalwood, and brought a stone mill and boilers, and after grinding off one small crop and making it into sugar, went back the next year with his fixtures, to China.”

He came here in one of the vessels trading for sandalwood, and brought a stone mill and boilers, and after grinding off one small crop and making it into sugar, went back the next year with his fixtures, to China.

On July 29, 1835, Ladd & Company obtained a 50-year lease on nearly 1,000-acres of land and established a plantation and mill site in Kōloa. “The first successful sugarcane plantation was started at Kōloa, Kaua‘i in 1835. Its first harvest in 1837 produced 2 tons of raw sugar, which sold for \$200. Other pioneers, predominantly from the United States, soon began growing sugarcane on the islands of Hawaii, Maui, and Oahu.” (HARC)

It was to change the face of Kaua‘i (and Hawai‘i) forever, launching an entire economy, lifestyle and practice of monocropping that lasted for over a century. A tribute to this venture is found at the Kōloa Sugar Memorial in Old Kōloa Town.

Shortly thereafter, King Kamehameha III, seeking to encourage commercial cultivation of sugar by native Hawaiians offered the "acre system," giving "out small lots of land, from one to two acres, to individuals for the cultivation of cane."

"When the cane is ripe, the King finds all the apparatus for manufacturing & when manufactured takes the half. Of his half one fifth is regarded as the tax due to the aupuni (government) & the remaining four fifths is his compensation for the manufacture. These cane cultivators are released from all other demands of every description on the part of chiefs." (Armstrong (1839); MacLennan)

Sugar gradually replaced sandalwood and whaling in the mid-19th century and became the principal industry in the islands until it was surpassed by the visitor industry in 1960. Early sugar planters shared many challenges: trade barriers, shortages of water and labor, and the lack of markets for their sugar.

Hawaiians were hired to work on the plantation. This had far-reaching effect on the social and economic make-up of the local society. This introduced the concept of independence for the Hawaiians. Workers were paid directly and no longer had to pay a tax to the chiefs.

Workers were initially paid with coins. Getting enough coins to pay the workers was difficult in the 1830s. In response, Kōloa Plantation initiated the use of script as payment to workers; these were redeemable for purchases at the plantation's store.

However, due to counterfeiting, in 1839, script was printed from engraved plates, with intricate wavy and networked lines. This more formal Kōloa Plantation script became the first paper money in Hawai'i. Not only was this script accepted at the Ladd & Company store, it became widely accepted by other merchants on the island.

About this time, the initial signs of commercial sugar are found on Maui, in Wailuku. In 1840, the King ordered an iron mill from the US, and it was erected by August. Hung & Co in 1841 advertised the sale of sugar and sugar syrup from its 150-acre plantation in Wailuku. More than likely, this was sugar from the King's Mill. (MacLennan)

Early plantations were small and didn't fare too well. Soon, most would come to realize that "sugar farming and sugar milling were essentially great-scale operations." (Garvin)

Then, the King sought to expand sugar cultivation and production, as well as expand other agricultural ventures to support commercial agriculture in the Islands. In a speech to the Legislature in 1847, the King notes:

"I recommend to your most serious consideration, to devise means to promote the agriculture of the islands, and profitable industry among all classes of their inhabitants. It is my wish that my subjects should possess lands upon a secure title; enabling them to live in abundance and comfort, and to bring up their children free from the vices that prevail in the seaports."



"What my native subjects are greatly in want of, to become farmers, is capital with which to buy cattle, fence in the land and cultivate it properly. I recommend you to consider the best means of inducing foreigners to furnish capital for carrying on agricultural operations, that thus the exports of the country may be increased ..." (King Kamehameha III Speech to the Legislature, April 28, 1847; Archives)

A few things helped kick-start this vision - following finding gold in 1848, the California gold rush stimulated a small boom in commercial agriculture for the Islands - particularly in potatoes and sugar. However, by the end of the 1850s, the boomlet became a depression (California started to supply its own needs.)

A decade later, the American Civil War virtually shut down Louisiana sugar production during the 1860s. Hawaiian-grown sugar soon replaced much of this southern sugar through the duration of the conflict.

By the end of the war, over thirty extremely prosperous plantations were in operation and expanded to new levels previously unheard of before the war's commencement.

Hawai'i's industrial plantations began to emerge at this time (1860s;) they were further fueled by the Treaty of Reciprocity - 1875 between the United States and the Kingdom of Hawai'i eliminated the major

trade barrier to Hawai'i's closest and major market. Through the treaty, the US obtained Pearl Harbor and Hawai'i's sugar planters received duty-free entry into U.S. markets for their sugar.

A century after Captain James Cook's arrival in Hawai'i, sugar plantations started to dominate the landscape. Hawai'i's economy turned toward sugar in the decades between 1860 and 1880; these twenty years were pivotal in building the plantation system.

Sugar was the dominant economic force in Hawai'i for over a century, other plantations soon followed Kōloa. By 1883, more than 50 plantations were producing sugar on five islands.

However, a shortage of laborers to work in the growing (in size and number) sugar plantations became a challenge. The only answer was imported labor.



Starting in the 1850s, when the Hawaiian Legislature passed "An Act for the Governance of Masters and Servants," a section of which provided the legal basis for contract-labor system, labor shortages were eased by bringing in contract workers from Asia, Europe and North America.

There were three big waves of workforce immigration:

- Chinese 1852
- Japanese 1885
- Filipinos 1905

Several smaller, but substantial, migrations also occurred:

- Portuguese 1877
- Norwegians 1880
- Germans 1881
- Puerto Ricans 1900
- Koreans 1902
- Spanish 1907



It is not likely anyone then foresaw the impact this would have on the cultural and social structure of the islands.

The sugar industry is at the center of Hawai'i's modern diversity of races and ethnic cultures. Of the nearly 385,000 workers that came, many thousands stayed to become a part of Hawai'i's unique ethnic mix.

Hawai'i continues to be one of the most culturally-diverse and racially-integrated places on the globe.

For nearly a century, agriculture was the state's leading economic activity. It provided Hawai'i's major sources of employment, tax revenues and new capital through exports of raw sugar and other farm products.

Sugar changed the social fabric of Hawai'i.

The sugar industry was the prime force in transforming Hawai'i from a traditional, insular, agrarian and debt-ridden society into a multicultural, cosmopolitan and prosperous one. (Carol Wilcox)

With statehood in 1959 and the almost simultaneous introduction of passenger jet airplanes, the tourist industry began to grow rapidly.

A majority of the plantations closed in the 1990s.

As sugar declined, tourism took its place - and far surpassed it. Like many other societies, Hawaii underwent a profound transformation from an agrarian to a service economy.

The industry came to maturity by the turn of the century; the industry peaked in the 1930s. Hawai'i's sugar plantations employed more than 50,000 workers and produced more than 1-million tons of sugar a year; over 254,500-acres were planted in sugar. (That plummeted to 492,000-tons in 1995; a majority of the plantations closed in the 1990s.)



The following includes individual summaries on each of the 'Big Five,' as well as a couple other associated entities that were associated with them, Dillingham (Benjamin Franklin Dillingham) and Campbell (James Campbell) and their associated companies.

First, the Big Five (in the order they were formed,) then the other two.

C. Brewer & Co.

Founded: October 1826; Capt. James Hunnewell (American Sea Captain, Merchant; Charles Brewer was American Merchant)

Incorporated: February 7, 1883

C Brewer & Co, Ltd began at a distant date under a different name, and is a result of the growth through the changes of time and circumstances rather than of any one definite act. (Thrum)

The following are the various names which the firm was known: James Hunnewell, Hunnewell & Peirce, Peirce & Hinckley, Peirce & Brewer, C Brewer & Co, SH Williams & Co, C Brewer 2d, C Brewer & Co Ltd. (The Friend, January 1, 1867)

In its early years, the following are the names of those who have been connected with this firm as partners: James Hunnewell, Thomas Hinckley, Henry A Peirce, Charles Brewer, JFB Marshall, Francis Johnson, William Baker Jr, Stephen H Williams, Benjamin F Snow, Charles Brewer 2d, Sherman Peck, CH Lunt, HAP Carter and I Bartlett. (The Friend, January 1, 1867)



If an exact date and a single act are to be assigned, it was on Monday, December 8, 1817, when James Hunnewell, officer of the brig Bordeaux Packet, agreed with Andrew Blanchard, master, to remain at Honolulu after the sale of the vessel. (Thrum)

He would dispose of the balance of her cargo and invest and forward the proceeds. This was the beginning of the long business career of Hunnewell connected with the Islands, and his first act in settling there. (Thrum)

Hunnewell first came to the Islands aboard the 'Packet' in October 1816. He agreed to stay (December 8, 1817) and traded his boat and cargo for sandalwood, "We were the only traders on shore at Honolulu that had any goods to sell." There was no currency at the time, so they generally traded for sandalwood. (Hunnewell, The Friend)

At first, business was generally in small transactions and by barter. American goods of nearly all sorts were received and sold on consignment. (Thrum)

After trading sandalwood in China and then back to the northeast, Hunnewell returned to the Islands in 1820 on the 'Thaddeus,' "This was the memorable voyage when we carried out the first missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands." He stayed ... "it was urged by some of the chiefs that knew me on my previous voyage that I should remain instead of a stranger to trade with them." (Hunnewell)

Later, in 1825, he negotiated with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, "to take the missionary packet out, free from any charge whatever on (his) part for sailing and navigating the vessel - provided the Board would pay and feed the crew, and allow (him) to carry out in the schooner to the amount (in bulk) of some forty to fifty barrels". (Hunnewell)



Then in 1826, with a stock of merchandise, he then purchased the premises of John Gowen (to which he added some land by exchange in 1830.) “As soon as I secured this place, I landed my cargo, and commenced retailing it...” (Hunnewell)

In October, 1828, Captain Marcus T Peirce, an old and intimate friend of Hunnewell’s, arrived in the brig Griffin

from the north-west coast. He gave up the command of his vessel to Captain MW Green, he preferring to return home.

In doing so, he requested that Hunnewell to take charge of his younger brother, Henry A Peirce, who had been a clerk with him. Young Peirce first worked for \$25 per month and board until September, 1830; after that he was given a share in the profits.

Hunnewell decided to return home on the continent (November 20, 1830) and left Peirce in charge; Hunnewell thought he would come back to the Islands, but never did. Hunnewell decided to remain at home, and Peirce accepted his offer to loan him funds enough to enable him to carry on the business himself and take the establishment at an appraised value.

“The name ... James Hunnewell was early associated with the commercial interests of these Islands, and his long and useful life was marked by such constant goodwill to my kingdom, that I shall always cherish his memory with sincere regard.” (Kamehameha V to Hunnewell’s son; Thrum)

Peirce took Hinckley as a partner; but Hinckley retired due to his health. Next, Charles Brewer arrived (on his third voyage to the Islands,) just before Hunnewell left for home. (Hunnewell, The Friend) For a while, Brewer commanded Peirce's vessels on their voyages to China and the Russian possessions.

In December, 1835, a co-partnership was formed by Peirce and Brewer. Under this partnership, the firm of Peirce & Brewer conducted a general merchandise and commission business at Honolulu. (Peirce)

“Mr. Peirce had been absent from home twelve years, and was anxious to go back and visit his family. He made me an offer to join him as a partner in business, which offer I accepted, and in one month from that time, Mr. Peirce left Honolulu for Boston, where he remained a year or more, returning by the way of Mexico and South America.” (Brewer)

“When I was received as a partner in business with Mr. Henry A. Peirce, I continued the firm name of Peirce & Brewer until Mr. Peirce retired, in 1843. I then continued the business as C Brewer & Co., with my nephew C Brewer, 2d, until the year 1845.” (Brewer)

That year, there was a merger with the firm of Marshall & Johnson (established in 1841 by James B. Marshall and Francis Johnson.) Brewer returned to Boston. “We arrived in Boston on March 26, 1849, and from that time, my sea life may be said to have ended.” (Brewer)

This association ended in 1847 and the business was taken over by SH Williams & Co, composed of Stephen H Williams, James B Marshall, William Baker Jr, and, a year later, Benjamin F Snow.

It was not until 1859 that the firm again and finally resumed the name of C Brewer & Co, when in September of that year, Charles Brewer II, a nephew of Captain Brewer, engaged in partnership with Sherman Peck and took over the business. (Nellist)

The second Brewer retired in the summer of 1861, but the business was continued under the Brewer name. At about this time the sugar industry was making its first strides and C Brewer & Co became agent for a plantation at Makawao, Maui.

In 1863, it had acquired holdings in Wailuku plantation, in 1866 Brewer became agent for Waihe'e plantation. In 1869 a son of Charles Brewer, John D Brewer, and IB Peterson were admitted as partners. A man who was destined to make C Brewer & Co. famous, Peter Cushman Jones, was admitted to partnership on Jan. 1, 1871.

C. Brewer & Co., Ltd., was incorporated on Feb. 7, 1883, with Peter Cushman Jones as president and manager; absorption of William G Irwin & Co. by C. Brewer & Co., Ltd., followed E. Faxon Bishop's elevation to the presidency. (Nellist)

The Brewer company grew, as did a handful of others – primarily in businesses associated with the booming economy. Since the early/mid-1800s, until relatively recently, five major companies emerged and dominated the state's economic framework. Their common trait: they were founded in agriculture - sugar and pineapple.

The decline in agricultural monocropping and a changing economy to the visitor industry, Brewer and the others lost their dominance. Longtime Brewer Chair, JWA 'Doc' Buyers, bought out the company and moved its headquarters to Hilo (2001.) The company, at the time Hawai'i's oldest continuously operating company, dissolved in 2006.

A lasting legacy of the company is the C Brewer Building, constructed in 1930, the last and smallest of the 'Big Five' home office buildings to be built in downtown Honolulu.



Theo H. Davies & Co.

Founded: 1845; James and John Starkey, and Robert C. Janion (English Merchants; Theophilus Harris Davies was Welch Merchant)

Incorporated: January 1894

Englishmen James and John Starkey and Robert Cheshire Janion founded Starkey, Janion, & Co, a trading company in Liverpool, in April 1845.

They chartered a vessel and filled it with general merchandise valued at \$80,000; it set sail for Honolulu. On arrival Janion rented a room on Nuʻuanu Street near the waterfront and hung out a sign “Starkey, Janion & Co.”

Later the same year, he negotiated a lease for a Kaʻahumanu Street site from Kamehameha III for “only 299 years,” as he wrote to the Starkeys, since “this was the best I could do.” (It was part of the claim of former British Consul Richard Charlton.



The firm quickly prospered, thanks to the whaling trade and prosperity on the Pacific coast. Transactions with the Hawaiians were bartered, coins and gold dust with the whalers.

They soon had their own fleet of ships sailing the seas between Hawaiʻi, the West Coast and England. As agent for Lloyd’s of London, Janion began underwriting cargoes leaving Honolulu harbor, later introducing fire insurance into the Islands.

By 1851, Janion and the Starkeys parted company. In the following year, Janion left Hawaii to return to Liverpool; to succeed him in Honolulu, Janion appointed a fellow countryman named William Green, whom he had hired two years earlier.

Then in 1856 he persuaded a Welshman, 23-year-old Theophilus Harris Davies, to go out to Hawaiʻi as a clerk for Green under a five-year contract. Eventually the Janion-Green partnership was dissolved and Davies became Janion’s partner.



In 1876, Davies incorporated Honolulu Iron Works with Janion, Janion's wife, Green's mother and Alexander Young. Janion died in 1881, leaving Davies in control.

Davies proved himself an aggressive promoter, playing a key role in the organization of Hāmākua, Laupāhoehoe, Niuliʻi, Kaiwiki and Union Mill plantations on the Big Island. He was adept at raising capital in London and helped finance a total of 22-plantations during his career.

Years later, Davies was a stockholder with Young in the organization of von Hamm-Young Company, forerunner of The Hawaiʻi Corporation. Principals were Young’s son Archibald, and Conrad C. von Hamm. An early project was the Alexander Young Hotel.

Toward the end of his career, Davies divided his time between Honolulu and his Nu‘uanu home, Craigsides, and England, where he maintained a home at Southport called Sunset in Hesketch Park. It was there that he served as guardian to Princess Ka‘iulani during her years in English schools.

Back in the Islands, his business was thriving despite political upheavals and sugar setbacks. In 1892, the company opened a steamship department as agent for Canadian-Australasian Line, which began service in that year. Later the department represented Canadian Pacific, Cunard and many others.

In 1893 grocery, dry goods and hardware departments were set up and the following year, when the company incorporated, a Hilo branch was opened. Four years later Davies died.

Formerly organized into merchandise, insurance and shipping departments, Theo H Davies set up subsidiaries for all its activities.

Merchandise lines are primarily heavy equipment: Pacific Machinery’s Caterpillar tractors, Hawaiian Fluid Power’s hydraulic lines, Stubenberg Company’s manufacturing of field equipment, Davies Building Materials, and Hilo Iron Works.

Inter-Island Equipment handled lighter lines such as lawn mowers and air compressors while Davies Brokerage handled some grocery lines. Davies Marine Agencies operated the former steamship department.

Davies Insurance Agencies acted for underwriters Janion represented. They also acquired EH Campbell Tire, Honolulu’s Goodyear Tire distributor, and Atlas Electric, electrical equipment distributor.

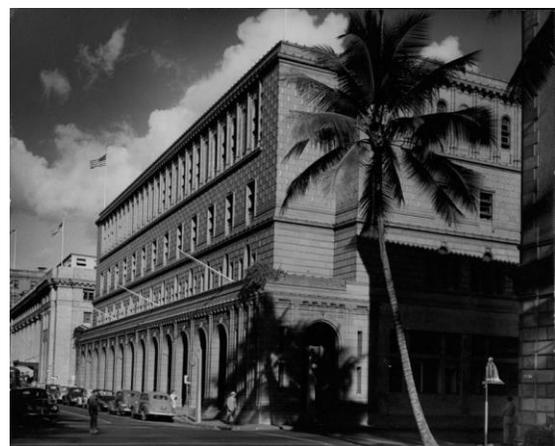
Davies expanded to the Philippines in 1928, opening a Manila branch. In the 1930s the company built up a heavy investment in four Philippine sugar plantations.

One of Hawai‘i’s Big Five (Amfac - starting as Hackfeld & Company (1849;) Alexander & Baldwin (1870;) Theo H. Davies (1845;) Castle & Cooke (1851) and C. Brewer (1826,) Davies grew to be second only to Amfac in territorial wholesaling.

It operated Honolulu’s pioneer retail grocery chain, Piggly-Wiggly, until the mid-1950s; it was also involved with Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, the Mandarin, Mercedes and Jaguar.

For a time in the 1960s Davies operated a building materials subsidiary in Spain with headquarters at Madrid but back in Honolulu the parent company was barely treading water. In the late 1960s and early-70s the company closed or sold off the drugs, dry goods, hardware and contract furnishing departments.

Mergers and consolidations reduced the company’s Big Island sugar plantations from five to three. Profits in merchandising were meager and returns on plantation investments were low. The iron works affiliate was sold to a mainland buyer that retrenched its activities drastically. (Lots of information here is from Greaney and Engle.)



Amfac

Founded: 1849; Heinrich Hackfeld and Johann Carl Pflueger (German Merchants)

Incorporated: 1897 (H Hackfeld & Co;) American Factors Ltd, 1918

On September 26, 1849, sea captain Heinrich (Henry) Hackfeld arrived in Honolulu with his wife, Marie, her 16-year-old brother Johann Carl Pflueger and a nephew BF Ehlers.

Having purchased an assorted cargo at Hamburg, Germany, Hackfeld opened a general merchandise business (dry goods, crockery, hardware and stationery,) wholesale, as well as retail store on Queen Street.

In 1850 he moved to a larger location on Fort Street. This store was so popular, it became known as "Hale Kilika" - the House of Silk (because it sold the finest goods available.) As business grew, the nephew took over management of the store while Hackfeld traveled the world for merchandise. The company took BF Ehlers' name in 1862.

Hackfeld developed a business of importing machinery and supplies for the spreading sugar plantations and exported raw sugar. H Hackfeld & Co became a prominent factor - business agent and shipper - for the plantations.

Its shipping interest, manufacturing and jobbing lines developed a web of commercial relationships with Europe, England and the eastern seaboard of the US. German whalers were still sailing the Pacific in the 1850s and Hackfeld bought and outfitted several whalers, brought in Pacific Coast lumber beginning in 1855 and engaged in the trans-shipment trade.

By 1855, Hackfeld operated two stores, served as agent for two sugar plantations, and represented the governments of Russia, Sweden and Norway. (Later the firm or its principals also represented Austro-Hungary, Belgium and Germany.) When Hackfeld left on a two-year business trip to Germany and Pflueger took charge in his absence. (Greaney)

In 1871 Hackfeld and Pflueger both went back to Europe to launch a German affiliate in Bremen. There they placed into service a line of ships sailing under the Hawaiian flag between Bremen and Honolulu with wheat, oil, wool and hides for the Islands and sugar shipments on the way back.

The old Honolulu Courthouse site was advertised for sale at auction in the Pacific Commercial Advertiser of May 9, 1874; H Hackfeld & Co bought it at the upset price of \$20,000. As reported by the Hawaiian Gazette, "It is the best business stand in Honolulu."

Then, the Treaty of Reciprocity (1875) between the US and the Kingdom of Hawai'i eliminated the major trade barrier to Hawai'i's closest and major market. Through the treaty, the US gained Pearl Harbor and Hawai'i's sugar planters received duty-free entry into US markets. Sugar boomed.

In 1881, Hackfeld and Paul Isenberg became partners. Isenberg, who had arrived in Hawai'i in 1858, had extensive experience in the sugar industry, previously working under Judge Duncan McBryde and Rev. William Harrison Rice in Kōloa and Lihū'e.

From that time on Mr. Isenberg was a factor in the development of the Hackfeld business, which became one of the largest in Hawai'i.

Hackfeld became the first Swedish and Norwegian Consul in the Islands. In 1862, he returned to Hamburg, and afterwards to Bremen, where he settled and managed the business of H. Hackfeld & Co. there until 1886, when he retired from the firm. In 1886 Hackfeld sold his interest in the company and returned to Germany; he died there on October 20, 1887.

When the partnership was incorporated in 1897, a new building was erected at the corner of Fort and Queen Streets; it stood there for 70-years.

After the US annexation of Hawaii in 1898, Isenberg returned to Germany to live; however, he retained the role of president, with Hackfeld's son, Johan (John) Friedrich Hackfeld serving as 1st vice president and Isenberg's son, Alexander Isenberg as 2nd vice president.



John later took over; however, he, too, returned to Germany in 1900. His cousin, George F Rodiek, became the executive in charge of H Hackfeld & Co. (Weiner) In 1905, Rodiek built an estate in Nu'uuanu.

A few years later, with the advent of the US involvement in World War I, things changed significantly for the worst for the folks at H Hackfeld & Co.

In 1918, using the terms of the Trading with the Enemy Act and its amendments, the US government seized H Hackfeld & Company and ordered the sale of German-owned shares. (Jung)

The Alien Property Custodian's Office noted, "The powerful German hold on the sugar industry of the Hawaiian islands has been crushed. The control of Hawaii's most important industry has been restored to its people."

"This is the effect of the announcement of A Mitchell Palmer, alien property custodian, that he had completed the Americanization of

the H Hackfeld Co, the threat German owned corporation which for years has played so important a part in the sugar situation of the Hawaiian islands."

"Mr. Palmer Americanized this German concern by ... selling the entire assets and business of the German Hackfeld Co to (an) American company, whose stockholders are all loyal American citizens, most of them residents of the Hawaiian islands." (Alien Property Custodian's Office; Daily News Almanac, 1919)

The patriotic sounding "American Factors, Ltd," the newly-formed Hawai'i-based corporation, whose largest shareholders included Alexander & Baldwin, C Brewer & Company, Castle & Cooke, HP Baldwin Ltd, Matson Navigation Company and Welch & Company, bought the H Hackfeld stock. (Jung)

At that same time, the BF Ehlers dry goods store also took the patriotic "Liberty House" name. In 1937 a second store was opened in the Waikiki area. Eventually there would be seven stores on Oahu, and several more on the other islands.

During the 1970s, Liberty House expanded into California, Nevada and Washington, but the Washington stores were sold in 1979 and the California and Nevada locations were sold in 1984. In 2001, Federated Department Stores Inc bought Liberty House, Hawai'i's oldest and largest department store chain, and turned it into Macy's.

American Factors shortened its name to "Amfac" in 1966. The next year (1967,) Henry Alexander Walker became president and later Board Chairman. Walker bought the former Rodiek estate.

Over the next 15-years, Walker took Amfac from a company that largely depended on sugar production in Hawai'i to a broadly diversified conglomerate. After adding so many companies, Amfac sales were \$1.3 billion by 1976, up from \$575 million in 1971. (hbs-edu)

After subsequent sales of controlling interests in the company and liquidation of land and other assets, in 2002, the once dominant business in Hawai'i, the biggest of the Hawai'i Big Five, Amfac Hawai'i, LLC filed for federal bankruptcy protection. (TGI)



Castle & Cooke

Founded: 1851; Samuel Northrup Castle and Amos Starr Cooke (American Mission Secular Agents)

Incorporated: 1894

In 1837 Samuel Northrup Castle and Amos Starr Cooke landed in the Sandwich Islands (Hawai'i,) as part of the 8th Company of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Neither were missionary ministers. Castle was assigned to the 'depository' (a combination store, warehouse and bank) to help the missionaries pool and purchase their supplies, to negotiate shipments around the Horn and to distribute and collect for the goods when received. Cooke was a teacher.

In 1839, King Kamehameha III formed O'ahu's first school was called the Chief's Children's School. The main goal of this school was to groom the next generation of the highest ranking chief's children of the realm and secure their positions for Hawaii's Kingdom.

Amos Starr Cooke and Juliette Montague Cooke were selected by the King to teach the 16 royal children and run the school. In this school were educated the Hawai'i sovereigns who reigned over the Hawaiian people from 1855, namely, Alexander Liholiho (King Kamehameha IV,) Queen Emma, Lot Kamehameha (King Kamehameha V,) King William Lunalilo, King David Kalākaua and Queen Lydia Lili'uokalani. No school in Hawai'i has ever produced so many Hawaiian leaders in one generation.

Twelve years after Castle and Cooke had landed in the Islands, the American board decided that its purposes had been accomplished. It advised its representatives that their work was done and the board's financial support would end.

Over the years Castle, who felt Cooke's accounting abilities would help the depository, kept trying to convince his friend to join him. Cooke firmly declined until 1849, when his schooling of the royal children was complete. He needed to make a living since monetary support from Missions headquarters had been discontinued.

Castle and Cooke, good friends, decided they would become business partners. Many of the missionaries were planning to remain. Their needs must be met. So those of other residents and the crews of the whaling ships which wintered in Honolulu harbor.

So a business was born. On June 2, 1851, Samuel Northrup Castle and Amos Starr Cooke signed their names to partnership papers. A sign reading 'Kakela me Kuke' ('Castle & Cooke') was installed at the entrance to the Honolulu depository.

Money could be made by trading with the community at large, while mission posts could be supplied at cost. They took up the matter with the Mission Board in Boston, which, after two years, decided to release the partners from the mission and pay each a yearly salary of \$500.



In 1853 a branch store was opened downtown, to be closer to the considerable action the California Gold Rush brought. Also in 1853, Castle and Cooke purchased their first ship, the Morning Star to ship produce to California. By 1856, the partners elected to sell the depository, located on the outskirts of Honolulu, to concentrate on their burgeoning downtown business.

In 1858, Castle and Cooke first ventured out of the mercantile business to make an investment in the new sugar industry. In the late 1860s they branched into the shipping business, handling shore-side business for a number of transpacific schooners and several inter-island vessels.

Despite these diversifications, however, the mercantile portion of the business continued to provide the bulk of the profits. One of the most active customers was Kana'ina, husband of High Chiefess Kekāuluohi and father of the boy who was to become King Lunalilo.

Then, the Civil War started; goods became hard to get and sales slumped. Then, business with the whalers failed; oil found in Titusville, Pennsylvania replaced whale oil. Castle & Cooke almost went out of business. It was sugar that encouraged the partners to continue their business.

They had generally avoided the policy of investing their firm's funds in other enterprises, but had bought personally into ventures that attracted them. This often led to relationships producing merchandise and shipping business for the firm and occasionally resulted in its appointment as fiscal agent for a company — as in the case of Kohala Sugar Company.

Kohala Sugar was founded in 1863 by the Rev Elias Bond; he organized the venture to create jobs for the Hawaiians living in Kohala. (It was not until 1910 that Castle & Cooke as a firm acquired an interest in the Kohala Sugar Company, though it had served as its agent for nearly 50 years.)

Then, in 1890, BF Dillingham's railroad (OR&L,) started with the help of \$100,000 invested by Castle, ended at Pearl City. To go further the line needed freight revenues. None were in sight - unless the Ewa land could be made to grow sugar by tapping its underlying fresh water sources to irrigate the crop.

From the organization of Kohala in 1863 until the Ewa lands were leased for sugar in 1890, Castle & Cooke at one time or another served as agent for nine plantations.



On December 28, 1894, the Castle & Cooke partnership was incorporated. The company continued to believe in the profitability of the Ewa Plantation and the risk paid off. In 1898, the original merchandise business was sold.

Diversification did not stop, however. In the ensuing years Castle & Cooke involved itself in an automobile company, the Hawaiian Fertilizer Company, and a big but short venture into the sugar refinery business with the Honolulu Sugar Refining Company.

Although Castle & Cooke had been in the shipping business for 50 years, a 1907 agreement with William Matson to be the agent for his Matson Navigation Company greatly increased the business in this area. The agreement endured for 56 years.

To insure a supply of oil for his ships, Captain Matson bought some wells in California and built a pipeline to the coast. In 1910 he founded the Honolulu Oil Corporation. Castle & Cooke, with other island firms, helped him finance his oil venture.

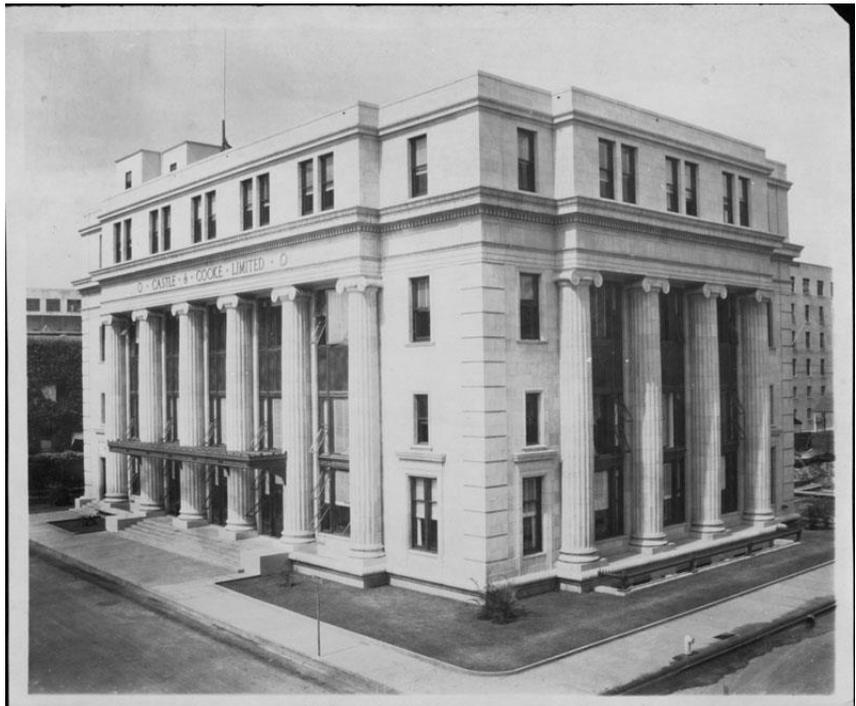
Pineapple cultivation on a commercial scale began in Hawaii in 1886 when Captain John Kidwell set out a thousand plants in Mānoa valley. By 1909, Castle & Cooke, as agent for Waialua, had negotiated leases of over 3,000 acres of the plantation's upper lands to James D Dole and other growers for pineapple plantings.

Castle & Cooke had no substantial direct investment in the pineapple industry until 1932 when Hawaiian Pineapple Company (later Dole) encountered financial trouble. In that year Castle & Cooke and Waialua jointly under wrote the reorganization of the pineapple company and for a few years thereafter, Castle & Cooke served as its agent and took over the operations.

Castle & Cooke recognized the need for diversification which led to investment in tuna canning (Hawaiian Tuna Packers, 1946) and macadamia nuts (Royal Hawaiian Macadamia Nuts, 1948.)

For a time in the 1960s, Castle & Cooke were the biggest of the Big Five (C Brewer (1826;) Theo H. Davies (1845;) Amfac - starting as Hackfeld & Company (1849;) Castle & Cooke (1851) and Alexander & Baldwin (1870;)) however, Amfac later outpaced it.

Later, the company was the subject of several takeover bids; ultimately, David Murdock took firm control of Castle & Cooke (1985,) reorganized it into a holding company for three separate operations: Flexi-Van, Dole Food and Oceanic Properties, and relocated its headquarters to Los Angeles. (Lots of information is from Castle & Cooke, Greaney and FundingUniverse.)



Alexander & Baldwin

**Founded: 1870; Samuel Thomas Alexander & Henry Perrine Baldwin (American, Sons of Missionaries)
Incorporated: 1900**

In 1843, Samuel Thomas Alexander and Henry Perrine Baldwin, sons of early missionaries to Hawai'i, met in Lāhainā, Maui. They grew up together, became close friends and went on to develop a sugar-growing partnership.

Alexander was the idea man, more outgoing and adventurous of the two. He had a gift for raising money to support his business projects.

Baldwin was more reserved and considered the “doer” of the partners; he completed the projects conceived by Alexander.

After studying on the Mainland, Alexander returned to Maui and began teaching at Lahainaluna, where he and his students successfully grew sugar cane and bananas.

Word of the venture spread to the owner of Waihe'e sugar plantation near Wailuku, and Alexander was offered the manager's position.

Alexander hired Baldwin as his assistant, who at the time was helping his brother raise sugar cane in Lāhainā. This was the beginning of a lifelong working partnership.

In 1869, the young men – Alexander was 33, Baldwin, 27 – purchased 12-acres of land in Makawao and the following year an additional 559-acres. That same year, the partners planted sugar cane on their land marking the birth of what would become Alexander & Baldwin (A&B.)

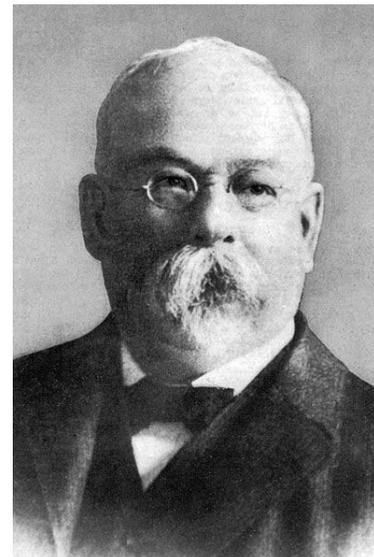
In 1871, they saw the need for a reliable source of water, and to this end undertook the construction of the Hāmākua ditch in 1876.

Although not an engineer, Alexander devised an irrigation system that would bring water from the windward slopes of Haleakala to Central Maui to irrigate 3,000 acres of cane – their own and neighboring plantations.

Baldwin oversaw the Hāmākua Ditch project, known today as East Maui Irrigation Company (the oldest subsidiary of A&B,) and within two years the ditch was complete.

The completed Old Hāmākua Ditch was 17-miles long and had a capacity of 60-million gallons per day. A second ditch was added, the Spreckels Ditch; when completed, it was 30-miles long with a capacity of 60-million gallons per day.

Before World War I, the New Hāmākua, Ko'olau, New Haiku and Kauhikoa ditches were built. A total of ten ditches were constructed between 1879 and 1923.



Over the next thirty years, the two men became agents for nearly a dozen plantations and expanded their plantation interests by acquiring Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company and Kahului Railroad.

In 1883, Alexander and Baldwin formalized their partnership by incorporating their sugar business as the Paia Plantation also known at various times as Samuel T Alexander & Co, Haleakala Sugar Co and Alexander & Baldwin Plantation.

By spring of 1900, A&B had outgrown its partnership organization and plans were made to incorporate the company, allowing the company to increase capitalization and facilitate expansion.

The Articles of Association and affidavit of the president, secretary and treasurer were filed June 30, 1900 with the treasurer of the Territory of Hawai'i. Alexander & Baldwin, Limited became a Hawai'i corporation, with its principal office in Honolulu and with a branch office in San Francisco.

Shortly after, in 1904, Samuel Alexander passed away on one of his adventures. While hiking with his daughter to the edge of Victoria Falls, Africa, he was struck by a boulder. Seven years later, Baldwin passed away at the age of 68 from failing health.

After the passing of the founders, Alexander & Baldwin continued to expand their sugar operations by acquiring additional land, developing essential water resources and investing in shipping (Matson) to bring supplies to Hawaii and transport sugar to the US Mainland markets.

What started off as partnership between two young men, with the purchase of 12 acres in Maui, has grown into a corporation with \$2.3 billion in assets, including over 88,000 acres of land.

(In 2012, A&B separated into two stand-alone, publicly traded companies – A&B, focusing on land and agribusiness and Matson, on transportation.)

A&B is the State's fourth largest private landowner, and is one of the State's most active real estate investors. It's portfolio includes a diversity of projects throughout Hawai'i, and a commercial property portfolio comprising nearly 8-million square feet of leasable space in Hawai'i and on the US Mainland.

It is also the owner and operator of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar plantation, the state's largest farm, with 36,000 acres under cultivation and Hawai'i's sole producer of raw and specialty sugar. (Information here is from Alexander & Baldwin.)



Dillingham

Benjamin Franklin (Frank) Dillingham

Benjamin Franklin (Frank) Dillingham formed OR&L (a narrow gauge rail,) whose economic being was founded on the belief that O'ahu would soon host a major sugar industry.

In 1885, Dillingham embarked on a land development project west of Honolulu and, like his continental counterparts, realized that this venture would not succeed without improved transportation to the area. He also figured that a railroad needed to carry freight, as well, in order to be profitable.

The drilling of the first artesian well on the Ewa Plain by James Campbell in 1879 presented Dillingham another opportunity. He obtained 50-year leases beginning in 1887 from Campbell in Ewa.

In 1888, the legislature gave Dillingham an exclusive franchise "for construction and operation on the Island of O'ahu a steam railroad ... for the carriage of passengers and freight."

Ultimately OR&L sublet land, partnered on several sugar operations and/or hauled cane from Ewa Plantation Company, Honolulu Sugar Company in 'Aiea, O'ahu Sugar in Waipahu, Waianae Sugar Company, Waiialua Agriculture Company and Kahuku Plantation Company, as well as pineapples for Dole.

Likewise, OR&L hauled various stages in the pineapple harvesting/production, including the canning components, fresh pineapple to the cannery, ending up hauling the cased products to the docks.



By 1895 the rail line reached Waianae. It then rounded Kaena Point to Mokeleia, eventually extending to Kahuku. Another line was constructed through central O'ahu to Wahiawa.

Passenger travel was an add-on opportunity that not only included train rides, they also operated a bus system. However, the hauling for the agricultural ventures was the most lucrative.

They even included a "Kodak Camera Train" (associated with the Hula Show) for Sunday trips to Haleiwa for picture-taking.

During the war years, they served the military.

Just like the rail programs on the continent, the railroad owned and operated the Haleiwa Hotel and offered city folks a North Shore destination with beaches, boating, golf, tennis and hunting. In 1898, as part of the O'ahu Railway & Land Company (OR&L) rail system, the Hale'iwa Hotel ("house of the 'iwa", or frigate bird) was completed.

The hotel was part of a bigger plan to expand and diversify operations of the OR&L rail line. OR&L primarily serviced the sugar plantations, adding a hotel at the end of the line opened up opportunities to expand the number of people riding the train.

Passenger travel was an add-on opportunity that not only included train rides; they also operated a bus system. However, the hauling for the agricultural ventures was the most lucrative.

Typical hotels, like the Moana and later the Alexander Young Hotel in downtown Honolulu, served the traditional function of accommodating visitors; Ben F. Dillingham's hotel sought that, as well as the diversified use of his train line.

On the continent, railroads were building hotels on their lines as a means to enhance the passenger counts – Hawai'i, through OR&L, was doing the same.

By the early-1900s, the expanded railway cut across the island, serving several sugar and pineapple plantations, and the popular Hale'iwa Hotel. They even included a "Kodak Camera Train" (associated with the Hula Show) for Sunday trips to Hale'iwa for picture-taking.



By 1953, the aged, termite-ridden structure had been torn down. Hale'iwa Joe's restaurant now stands where the Hale'iwa Hotel once stood.

In addition, OR&L (using another of its "land" components,) got into land development. It developed Hawai'i's first planned suburban development and held a contest, through the newspaper, to name this new city.

The winner selected was "Pearl City" (the public also named the main street, Lehua.) The railway owned 2,200-acres in fee simple in the peninsula. First they laid-out and constructed the improvements, then invited the public on a free ride to see the new residential community. The marketing went so well; ultimately, lots were auctioned off to the highest bidder.

Multiple factors affected the ultimate demise of the rail operations: sugar/pineapple production fizzled in the islands; more and more people were getting automobiles for travel; a 1946 tsunami damaged tracks and the war's end stopped military travel.

At the turn of the 20th century, portions of this marshy wetland were determined to be "deleterious to the public health in consequence of being low, and at times covered or partly covered by water, or of being situated between high and low water mark, or of being improperly drained, or incapable by reasonable expenditure of effectual drainage".



A portion of this was owned by the Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate who reportedly sold 50-acres of this “unproductive” “swamp land” for \$25,000 to Walter F Dillingham in 1912. At the time this was real money and people questioned his decision.

However, shortly thereafter, Dillingham used the site to dispose of excess coral and other fill that was generated from land reclamation projects from Kewalo to Waikīkī (including the dredging of the Ala Wai Canal.)

In 1948, Lowell Dillingham, Walter’s son, announced plans for a new shopping complex on the coral-covered parcel. Nearly 10-years later, construction on Hawai‘i’s first regional shopping center commenced. (Lowell is also credited the formation of Dillingham Corporation, a merger of the Oahu Railway & Land Company and the Hawaiian Dredging and Construction Company, in 1961.)

On August 13, 1959, over a thousand people gathered near the Sears’ end for the grand opening of Ala Moana Center. They say the first purchase in the center was made by Ben Dillingham and his wife, a tube of Colgate toothpaste at Sears

The center doubled in size in 1966 to 1,351,000-square feet of leasable area, with 155 stores and 7,800 parking spaces. New stores included anchor tenants JC Penney and Liberty House.

Oh, about Dillingham’s questioned \$25,000 land buy back in 1912 ... the City and County of Honolulu 2013 assessed value (for just the land) is \$355,455,200.

The Dillinghams were out of transportation, but were active in development, construction and dredging. Dillingham Corporation was sold to a private investment group in 1983 for \$347-million; in 2003, with base facilities relocated to California, Dillingham Corporation filed for bankruptcy.



Campbell

James Campbell

James Campbell, son of William and Martha (Adams) Campbell, descended from the Scottish Campbell clan and was the eighth child in the family of eight boys and four girls (born in Ireland, February 4, 1826.) His father was a carpenter who operated a furniture and cabinet shop adjacent to the home where he and his wife raised their family.



With limited opportunities on that island, at the age of 13, he stowed away on a schooner for Canada and later wound up on a whaler out of New Bedford and was bound for the Pacific. He survived a shipwreck in the South Pacific (Tuamotus) on the way.

He and two shipmates immediately were seized by the Islanders and bound to trees to await their fate. After Campbell fixed the chief's broken musket, they were freed and accepted as members of the community. A few months later Campbell left the Island by drifting out to a passing schooner that took him to Tahiti, and later (1850) he went to Hawai'i.

He settled in Lāhainā, Maui and honed his skill as a carpenter in building and repairing boats and constructing homes. He boarded with a European named Barla and married Barla's only child, Hannah. There were no children of this marriage, which ended with the death of young Hannah Barla Campbell in 1858.

He expanded beyond carpentry and ventured into the Islands' fledgling sugar industry. Sugar was being processed in small quantities in Lāhainā throughout the 1840s and 1850s; in 1849, it was reported that the finest sugar in the islands could be found in Lāhainā. (Maly)

Campbell started a sugar plantation there in 1860. The small mill, together with cane from Campbell's fields, manufactured sugar on shares for small cane growers in the vicinity. Soon after the establishment of the new plantation, Henry Turton and James Dunbar joined Campbell. Under the name of Campbell & Turton, the company grew cane and manufactured sugar.



When the nearby Lāhainā Sugar Company, a small company founded by H Dickenson in 1861, went bankrupt in 1863, its assets were acquired by Campbell and his partners.

In 1865, the plantation became known as Pioneer Mill Company (that year Dunbar left the company.) By 1874, Campbell and Turton added the West Maui Sugar Company, a venture of Kamehameha V, to the holdings of Pioneer Mill Company.

By 1876, the annual production had increased to 1,708-tons of raw sugar and the World's Fair in Philadelphia awarded Pioneer Mill a prize for its fine quality sugar that year. In 1882, Honolulu Iron Works built an iron three-roller mill for the factory and soon there were six boilers generating steam power to drive the machinery.

Pioneer Mill Company not only survived but thrived and enabled Campbell to build a palatial home in Lāhainā. Despite his success in sugar, his interests turned to other matters, primarily ranching and real estate and he started to acquire lands in O'ahu, Maui and the island of Hawai'i.

In 1876, Campbell purchased approximately 15,000-acres at Kahuku on the northernmost tip of O'ahu from HA Widemann and Julius L Richardson. In 1877, he acquired from John Coney 41,000-acres of ranch land at Honouliuli.

In 1877, he sold his interest in Pioneer Mill Company to his partner, Turton; he married Abigail Kuaihelani Maipinepine (age 19) and soon after moved to a home on Emma Street in Honolulu, which Campbell purchased from Archibald S Cleghorn in 1878. (Now the site of the Pacific Club.)

Princess Ka'iuilani, daughter of the Cleghorns, was born there in 1875. The Campbells' first daughter, Abigail Wahiikaahuula, later Princess Abigail Kawānanakoa, was born in the same room as Princess Ka'iuilani. (Other children included Alice, Beatrice and Muriel; four other children were born to the couple but died in infancy.)

In 1883 he built the Campbell Block Building at the corner of Merchant and Fort Streets, Honolulu, where he established his office. (This building was headquarters for the Campbell Estate until 1967, when the Estate constructed the modern James Campbell Building at this site to house its offices.)



In 1885, Pioneer Mill Company, cultivating about 600 of its 900 acres of land and producing about 2,000 tons of sugar a year, encountered difficulties and Turton declared bankruptcy. To protect his mortgage, Campbell, with financial partner Paul Isenberg of Hackfeld and Company, acquired all the stock and Campbell again took on management of the operation.

With major interests on Maui and O'ahu, Campbell split his time between the Islands. He was a member of the House of Nobles representing Maui, Molokai and Lāna'i in the special session of 1887 and the regular session of 1888.

Back on O'ahu, critics scoffed at the doubtful value of Campbell's purchase of Honouliuli. But he envisioned supplying the arid area with water and commissioned California well-driller James Ashley to drill a well on his Honouliuli Ranch. In 1879, Ashley drilled Hawai'i's first artesian well; Campbell's vision had made it possible for Hawai'i's people to grow sugar cane on the dry lands of the 'Ewa Plain.

In 1889, Campbell leased about 40,000-acres of land for fifty years to BF Dillingham (of O'ahu Railway and Land Co;) after several assignments and sub-leases, about 7,860-acres of Campbell land ended up with Ewa Plantation.

('Ewa Plantation was considered one of the most prosperous plantations in Hawai'i and in 1931 a new 50-year lease was executed, completing the agreement with O'ahu Railway and Land Company and beginning an association with Campbell Estate. The 'Ewa mill closed in the mid-1970s; the mill was demolished in 1985.)

After a lengthy illness, Campbell died on April 21, 1900, in his Emma Street home. On the afternoon of his funeral the banks and most of the large business houses closed. (In January of 1902, Abigail Campbell married Colonel Sam Parker.)

"We knew him then as a very capable and industrious mechanic at Lahaina. By hard work and sound judgment, twenty years later he had built up a valuable sugar plantation in Lahaina. From that beginning of wealth he became the possessor of more than three millions of property, all of it, to the best of our knowledge, honestly gained without detriment to others." (The Friend, May 1, 1900)

When Campbell died, the Estate of James Campbell was created as a private trust to administer his assets for the benefit of his heirs (in 2007, the James Campbell Company succeeded the Estate of James Campbell.) The Estate played a pivotal role in Hawai'i history, from the growth of sugar plantations to the growing new City of Kapolei.

Over the years, Campbell became known by the Hawaiians as "Kimo Ona-Milliona" (James the Millionaire.) Campbell himself said that the principle upon which he had accumulated his wealth was in always living on less than he made. (Lot of information here from Campbell Estate publications.)

